

**International Federation  
of Trekkers**

**FEDERATION ACADEMY**



**Staff Officer Course  
(SOC)**

by

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## Printings

### Original Edition

First Printing.....January 1998  
E-Mail Edition.....February 2005  
Second E-Mail Edition.....April 2005

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# Staff Organization and Functions

The staff exists for one purpose, to assist the commander in carrying out the functions of command for which they are responsible. These include the operational and supporting functions. Operational functions are the normal command missions: decision-making, formulating goals and plans, and problem solving. Supporting functions provide for the physical and moral welfare of the crew.

If a staff is to furnish maximum assistance to the commander, it must be organized to function effectively. An efficient staff depends on sound organization to be effective. For this reason much emphasis is placed on dividing the work of the staff, assigning personnel to positions on the staff, and for delegating authority by assigning duties to crew members within the staff.

It is the duty of all staff officers to present the commander with all the information that he or she needs to make an informed decision to be implemented. A recommended action should accompany this information and should be presented in such a way that the commander may indicate approval or disapproval.

It is your duty to present and consider both sides to every problem. If you believe that the commander's decision is wrong, it is your obligation to tactfully let him know what you think, and to offer an alternate solution or idea.

# The Command Staff

A ship's command staff will usually consist of the following Departments:

Commanding Officer  
Executive Officer  
Financial Officer  
Operations  
Security  
Engineering  
Personnel  
Science  
Medical  
Communications  
Historian/Archives  
Counselor

These are the positions used on the U.S.S. Phoenix. Of course no ship is required to have all of these staff positions. We will discuss, in some detail, the ones that are required for each chapter by IFT.

## *Executive Officer (XO)*

The Executive Officer or 1<sup>st</sup> Officer is responsible for:

- A. Assisting the Commanding Officer as necessary to maintain chapter integrity, unity, and cohesiveness.
- B. Taking the reports of the Department Heads at chapter meetings
- C. Being able to take over from the Captain in his or her absence and if necessary, assume command in the event that the Captain is removed from office or leaves office for some reason.

These are just a few of the most important functions of an XO. Most chapters have additional duties that the XO performs. As you can see, a good Executive Officer is one of the most important assets to any commander. They must also be ready, willing, and able to assume the duties of the Captain.

## *Financial Officer*

The Financial Officer is responsible for the following:

- a. Maintaining the chapter financial records, showing all chapter funds, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and any outstanding payments or debts.
- b. Maintaining and balancing the chapter checking and savings account.
- c. The collecting and depositing of all funds from chapter projects and fundraisers.
- d. Disbursements of chapter funds, upon approval of the chapter membership and with the signature of the Commanding Officer.
- e. Providing a complete financial report at each monthly chapter meeting and for publication in the newsletter.
- f. The preparation and reporting of all necessary tax information, both state and federal.

The Financial Officer must be a person who is capable and responsible. A person who is good with numbers and can balance a checkbook! If anything is to be run professionally, it is the chapter finances.

## *Security*

The Chief of Security is responsible for keeping order at chapter meetings and for maintaining relations with other ships and groups. Duties include:

- a. Maintaining order at all chapter meetings and events. Meetings should be run according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- b. Overseeing the annual election of officers as Chairman of the Elections Committee.
- c. Securing and maintaining relations with other Star Trek affiliated groups or ships.
- d. If necessary, arranging transportation to and from chapter events.

## ***Engineering***

The Chief of Engineering is responsible for organizing and overseeing chapter fund raising and charitable events. Duties include:

- a. Presenting fund raising ideas to the membership at chapter meetings for discussion.
- b. Acting as the Supervising Officer on all fund raising projects and charitable events.
- c. Providing a report to the Commanding Officer upon the completion of each event.
- d. Providing an article for publication in the newsletter to include project updates and progress reports.

A good public relations type with a talent in art and design is a prime candidate for this position.

## ***Personnel***

The Chief of Personnel is the person responsible for the maintenance of records on the chapter membership. Duties include:

- a. Taking attendance at all chapter meetings and events.
- b. Maintaining a file on each crewmember, to include:
  1. Record of attendance
  2. Service points earned for promotion
  3. Status of membership
  4. Voting status
  5. Record of promotions
- c. Keeping the Commander and the Communications Officer updated on membership, new and re-enlisting members, and membership rosters.
- d. Preparing an article for publication in the newsletter, including announcement of new members and any other items of interest regarding chapter and IFT membership.
- e. Assisting in the election of new officers as a member of the Elections Committee.

Although the Personnel Department is not specifically required by IFT, I do not see how any chapter could live without a Personnel or Administration person.

### *Science*

The Chief Science Officer is responsible for the education of the chapter crewmembers as they relate to the Star Trek universe. They should stay current on scientific happenings in the real world and relay them to the chapter. Duties include:

- a. Acting as liaison between the IFT Academy and the chapter.
- b. Acting as the Testing Officer for the Academy at the chapter level.
- c. Arranging educational opportunities for the chapter membership to include trips to Museums, Science Centers, and arranging speakers for chapter meetings.
- d. Providing an article for the newsletter on items of interest to the membership.

### *Medical*

The Chief Medical Officer is responsible for the health and welfare of the chapter membership as well as the social health of the group. Duties include:

- a. Becoming certified at Red Cross basic first aid and CPR, and encouraging the chapter members to do the same by arranging for a course in first aid and CPR to be taught to the membership.
- b. Assembling and maintaining a chapter first aid kit to be available at all chapter meetings and functions.
- c. Providing basic first aid (if certified) at chapter events when needed.
- d. Keeping the chapter membership updated on recent medical advances through an article in the newsletter.

Important: The Chief Medical Officer, unless they are an MD, is not a Doctor. Nor should their actions imply any professional medical certification

or training. The best candidate for this position is of course a Doctor, Nurse, EMT, Paramedic, Fireman, and etcetera. If you are not, do not pretend to be one.

### *Communications*

The Chief Communications Officer is responsible for maintaining the lines of communication between the chapter and other IFT chapters, organizations, and IFT. Duties include:

- a. Maintaining the lines of communication between the chapter and other chapters in IFT as well as other Star Trek affiliated groups and ships.
- b. Maintaining the lines of communications between the chapter and IFT.
- c. Providing an article for publication in the chapter newsletter to include recent developments in computers, wireless technology, and satellite communications.

In addition to the above listed positions, the U.S.S. Phoenix has two additional staff positions that we feel are beneficial to the efficient operation of the chapter.

The first is the Chief of Archives/Historian. This person is responsible for keeping a historical record of the ship and its crew. Also the Chief of Archives/Historian acts as the Editor of the chapter newsletter. Some chapters have a separate newsletter editor position, while others use the Communications Officer for this position.

Second is the Counselor, whose primary job is to oversee the Public Relations activities of the chapter such as acting as liaison between the chapter and the charitable organizations that we support. Also he or she is responsible for the sending of press releases to the local media: television, radio, and newspapers.

# The Paper Trail

Reporting is the method by which we stay in contact with one another by keeping each other and the chain of command informed. Here are a few of the reports that IFT uses to accomplish this.

## *The IFT Monthly Progress Report*

The IFT Monthly Progress Report is probably the most important report the Commanding Officer must report each month. You might think, “I am not the Commander so why do I have to concern myself with this report?”

First of all, how do you think your Commanding Officer obtains the information that they need to complete their monthly report? Their staff! You. That is why the staff officer is so important to the Commanding Officer and the smooth operation of the chapter.

The items necessary to be included on the IFT Monthly Progress Report are:

- a. The Heading information (Chapter, Registry, Commander, Period Covered, Date filed, and your GEO) is pretty much self-explanatory.
- b. Current Status. Under activities this month, include any projects, in which your chapter is involved. Include Dates! This also includes parties, fundraisers, working security, role-playing, conventions attended, etc.
- c. Plans for next period, things your chapter is planning for the next month.
- d. Long-term plans, anything your chapter is planning to do in the future or have planned in the next few months.
- e. Financial Officer, Listen Up! The next section is the financial status of the chapter, so your input is required. Your Commanding Officer will need to list any income the chapter has received and expenditures it has paid out. Income and Expenditures will have to be listed for This Period, Year to Date, and for the near future Projected Period.
- f. Also under the heading of finance is Funds Enclosed. That is for any items you are purchasing (ribbons, patches, etc.) from IFT Headquarters, and dues that need to be sent in. Do not send dues to the GEO, only to IFT Headquarters.
- g. Purpose: the reason you are sending the money in with the report.

- h. Personnel: under this section your Commanding Officer will need information from the Personnel Officer. Enlistment and Reenlistments, Promotions and Demotions, and Commendations are listed here.
- i. Ship's Services: Your Commanding Officer can request packets from IFT: applications, IFT Handbooks, report forms, Captain Log's, etc.
- j. If it is you who prepares the report for your Commanding Officer's signature, be sure that both you and your Commanding Officer sign the form!
- k. The finished report needs to be sent to the GEO Commander and to IFT Headquarters by the 10<sup>th</sup> of every month.

The IFT Monthly Progress Report is the form that requires the most input from you, the staff officer. Another form that is needed from you as members is the Discrepancy Report.

### ***The Discrepancy Report***

This form is used to update the IFT database, such as Names, Addresses, Phone Numbers, E-Mail Addresses, a new rank promotion, and anything that was missed or incorrect from the last Quarterly Report.

### ***The Quarterly Report***

The Quarterly Report is a copy of the chapter roster, as IFT Command knows it. It comes out every Quarter. If your Commanding Officer fails to show you and the rest of the membership the Quarterly Report, make sure you ask them to. You are responsible for insuring that the IFT database is up to date and that all of the information is correct and current.

I hope this course has given you some useful information and that it helps you become the Staff Officer that every Commanding Officer dreams of.

Good luck in you IFT career and to paraphrase the Captain of the Enterprise: "Let's make it so."